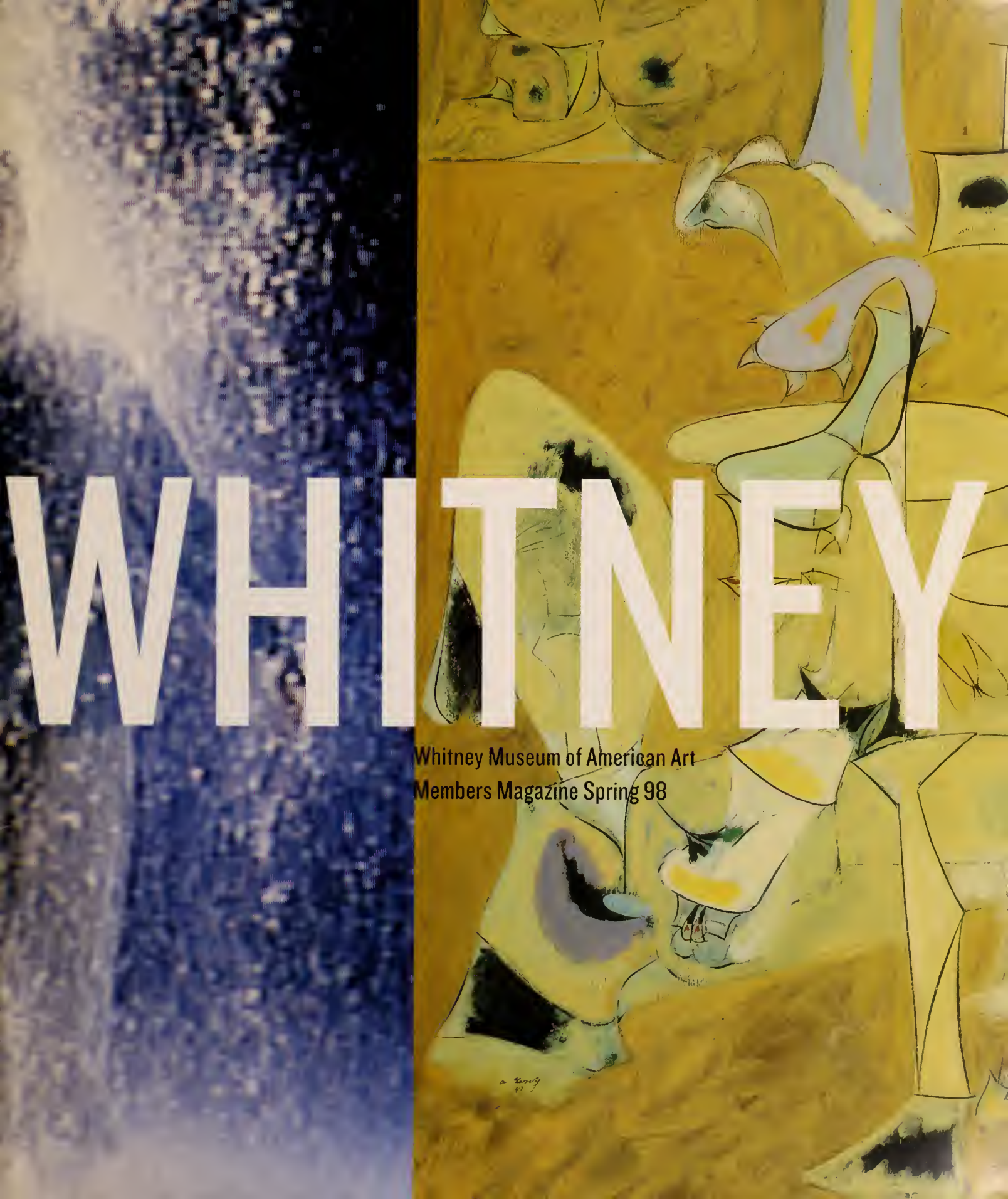

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum of American Art
Members Magazine Spring 98

WHITNEY Magazine is published
by the Whitney Museum of American Art
for its members.

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This magazine is printed on Sterling Premium Gloss, Stonehenge, Stonehenge Gloss, Komekote® and Benefit® paper manufactured by Champion International Corporation.

Cover: Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration of the Negro, Panel no. 1*, 1940–41 (detail). Tempera on hardboard. The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

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PERMANENT COLLECTION P. 17

PERMANENT COLLECTION P. 6

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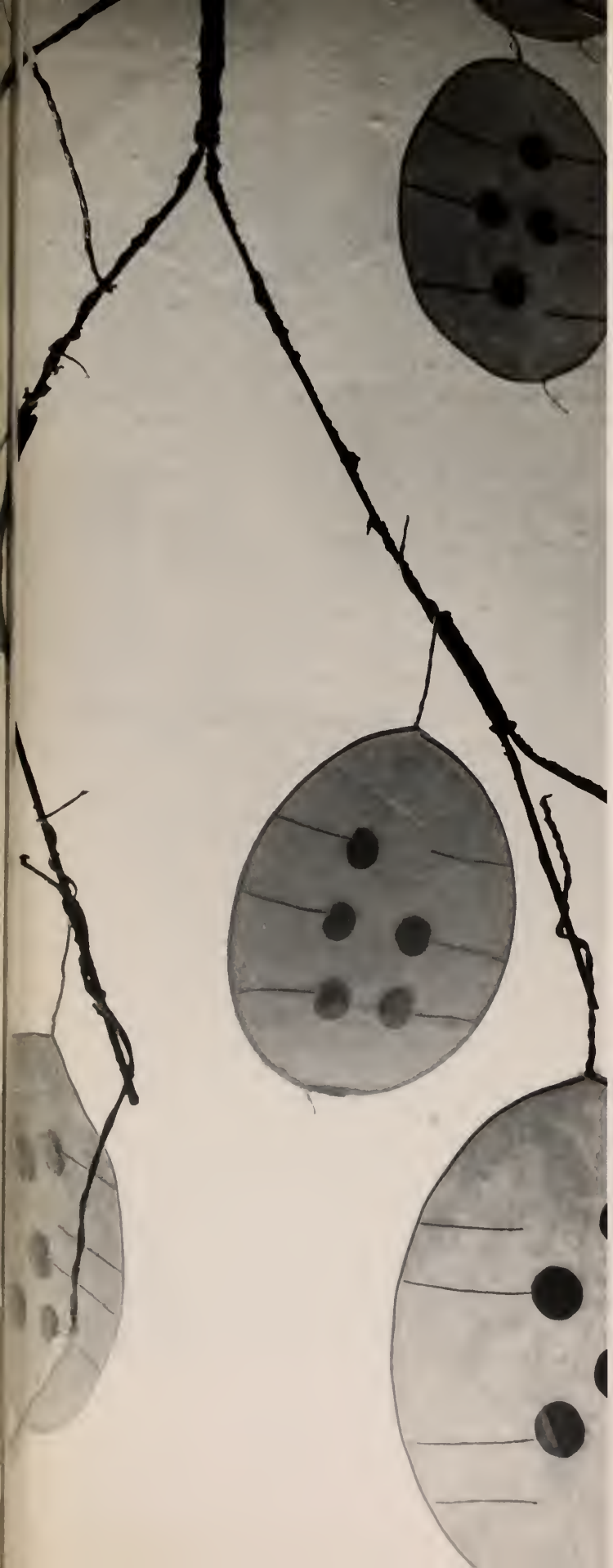


CONTENTS

2 From the Director

Permanent Collection Galleries

3 Interview with Adam D. Weinberg

4 A Conversation with Flora Miller Biddle

5 The Galleries

7 Exploring the Permanent Collection Galleries

18 Bill Viola

20 Arthur Dove:
A Retrospective

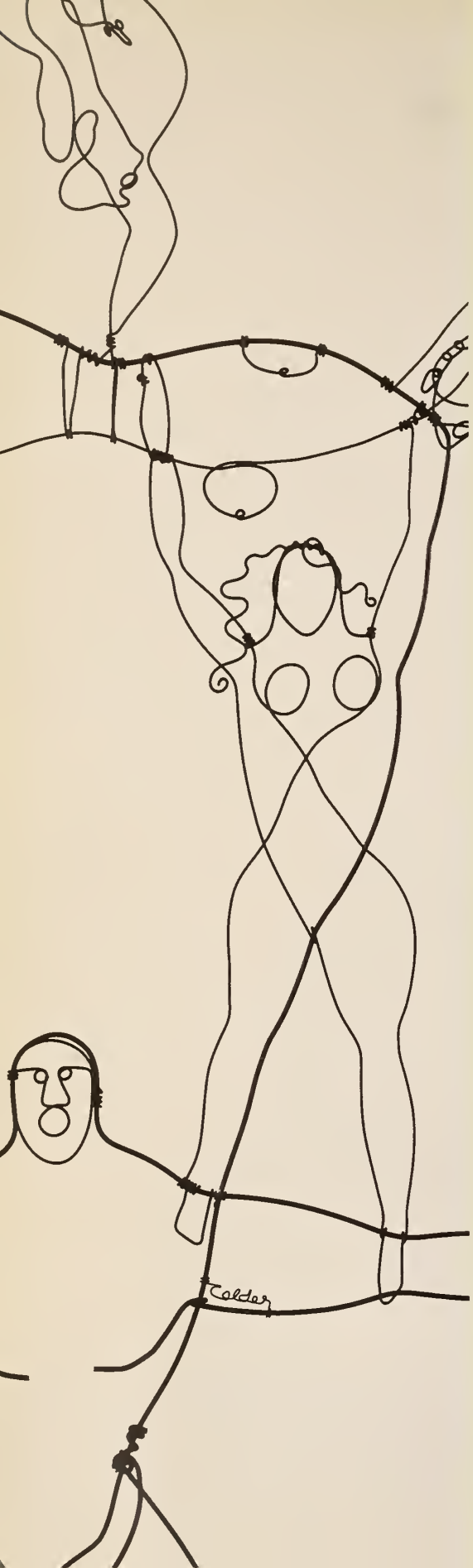
8 Campaign for the Whitney

10 For Members Only

12 Collection in Context: 1948

13 A Whitney Palette

14 At the Branch Museums



Dear Members and Friends,

Sixty-seven years ago, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney opened the Whitney Museum on West 8th Street with a sparkling party attended mostly by artists. Her spirit will be very much alive this spring when we invite you to join the weeklong festivities celebrating the historic occasion of the opening of the Museum's new Permanent Collection galleries. A series of special events, receptions, and private viewings will culminate in a 24-hour–long party at the Whitney, lasting from 7 pm on Saturday, April 4, to 7 pm on Sunday, April 5. I hope you will also participate in the array of activities taking place throughout the Museum, including talks I will be giving to introduce the new galleries. During the coming weeks, please watch for your invitation to this and other opening events.

Nine new galleries on the Museum's fifth floor, comprising nearly 8,000 square feet of exhibition space, will be devoted to the continuous display of the Whitney's world-renowned Permanent Collection. Members and visitors will have a unique opportunity to survey the rich diversity of 20th-century American art through an expanded presentation of more than 100 works–painting, sculpture, prints, photographs, and drawings–by artists long championed by the Whitney Museum. These new galleries will enable the Museum to better fulfill its mission to acquire, exhibit, and preserve the finest examples of 20th-century American art, while continuing to serve as a context for changing shows on all other floors of the Whitney.

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's announcement of the founding of the Whitney Museum on January 6, 1930, followed a twenty-year period during which she was an enthusiastic patron of American art, encouraging artists through purchase and exhibition. On display in the new galleries will be classic masterpieces of American art from 1900 to 1950, many from Mrs. Whitney's original gift of works donated to the Museum when it opened in 1931. Others were acquired from the Annual and Biennial Exhibitions that were inaugurated by Mrs. Whitney in 1932.

Most of the works on view in the new galleries were donated by early patrons or by the artists themselves. Gifts of art through the years have immeasurably enriched the Whitney's Permanent Collection. Approximately 1,250 individual donors have given nearly 12,000 works of art to the Museum for its Permanent Collection. The Whitney legacy has been strengthened by bequests, both large and small. The most notable example is Edward Hopper's entire artistic estate of 2,500 works, bequeathed to the Whitney in 1968 by his widow, Josephine Hopper. The Hopper Bequest represents the largest gift of a single artist's work ever made to any American museum.

As you renew your Whitney membership, contribute to the Museum's Annual Fund, or consider giving a work of art or a planned gift to the Whitney, you are helping to enlarge the legacy of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, a legacy now embodied by our Permanent Collection. As a vital member of the Whitney Museum family, you are invited to share the sense of pride we all feel in the Museum's accomplishments on this historic occasion.

David A. Ross, Laurie Tisch Sussman, Barbara Haskell, and Leonard A. Lauder

David A. Ross

rmanent Collection

Installing the New Permanent Collection Galleries

Interview with Adam D. Weinberg, curator, Permanent Collection, by Andrew Decker

For the past decade, finding a place to hang some of the Whitney's masterpieces has been tougher than landing a subway seat at rush hour. With the opening of the new fifth floor and the easing of the space crisis, curator Adam Weinberg has had an opportunity to reconsider the Museum's historic collections. The new installation of approximately 130 works, dating from 1900 to 1950, presents many familiar paintings in a new light.

AD: What will we be seeing in the Museum's new space?

AW: To begin with, you'll see many of the iconic works that people associate with the Whitney: *Dempsey and Firpo* by George Bellows, Marsden Hartley's *Painting, Number 5*, Joseph Stella's *The Brooklyn Bridge: Variation on an Old Theme*, *Early Sunday Morning* by Edward Hopper, *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti* by Ben Shahn, Georgia O'Keeffe's *Summer Days*. They will be hung in roughly chronological order, and we are giving the installation various focal points in terms of schools—Ashcan, Precisionism, Social Realism—to provide an overview of American art during the first half of the century. Other galleries will encapsulate the career of a single artist: Edward Hopper, Alexander Calder, Georgia O'Keeffe. These are artists in whom the Museum has had a strong interest for a particularly long time: Hopper had his first one-artist show at the Whitney Studio Club in 1920, and retrospectives here in 1950, 1964, and 1980; the Whitney gave O'Keeffe her first retrospective in 1970; and Calder had his first exhibition at the Whitney in 1942 and was subsequently shown in more than 20 Annuals.

Ben Shahn, *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti*, 1931–32. Tempera on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Gift of Edith and Milton Lowenthal in memory of Juliana Force 49.22

Two galleries will be devoted to works on paper—one to prints and drawings, the other to photographs. Works on paper will also be integrated with the traditionally "major" media of painting and sculpture in the installations of other galleries. For example, we'll exhibit a pastel and an assemblage by Arthur Dove and a watercolor by John Marin in the gallery featuring the Stieglitz circle of artists, a Man Ray photogram in the Precisionist gallery, and drawings, prints, or watercolors in the Hopper, O'Keeffe, and Calder galleries.

AD: Will you rotate the works on paper? The oil paintings?

AW: The works on paper, due to their fragile nature, will rotate three times a year. The oils will change only on occasion. The essentially permanent nature of this installation provides a touchstone for school groups and university classes as well as for general visitors, who will be assured of seeing works that have made American art as widely appreciated as it is today.

AD: Will there be less familiar works on view?

AW: Yes. We'll exhibit *The Back Room*, an early Ashcan-style work by Stuart Davis, as well as works by Charles Sheeler, Alice Neel, and Raphael Soyer that haven't been on view for quite some time.

AD: What about post-1950 art?

AW: The fifth floor is large, but given the height of the ceilings, many of the post-World War II works, and especially some of the Abstract Expressionist canvases, cannot be exhibited comfortably in its galleries. But they're obviously an important part of our collection, so we'll be showing them in changing, thematic exhibitions on other floors. I like to think of the fifth floor as a *basso continuo* and the temporary exhibitions from the collection as a counterpoint.

A Conversation with Flora Miller Biddle

Robert Henri, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney*, 1916. Oil on canvas, Whitney Museum of American Art; Gift of Flora Whitney Miller 86.70.3

On the occasion of the opening of the new Permanent Collection galleries, Flora Miller Biddle, Honorary Trustee and former President of the Whitney Museum, reflects on the legacy of her grandmother, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, founder of the Museum.

"This museum is the embodiment of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. Its name is not egotistic, but a symbol of her profound belief in America and in her country's art and artists. When Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney herself became an artist, around the turn of the century, she was distressed to find that there existed almost no interest in or appreciation of American artists or their work. It was her nature to act when she saw a need, and so in 1907 she started showing the work of her fellow artists in her studio on 8th Street. In 1914 the Whitney Studio became the first precursor of the Whitney Museum of American Art."

The Museum opened in 1931 with Mrs. Whitney's collection of about 500 works of art and a modest but serviceable endowment. After Mrs. Whitney's death in 1942, her daughter, Flora Whitney Miller, assumed an active role at the helm of the Museum and remained President for 25 years. Mrs. Miller's daughter, Flora Biddle, who became a Trustee in 1958 and President in 1977, recalls the long-range planning committee which was initiated by Director Tom Armstrong and President Howard Lipman in the 1970s to review the Whitney's programming and mission. "They came up with a report that shifted the Museum's emphasis to the Permanent Collection. Building on its strengths, during the next years the Museum collected a group of artists in depth—Alexander Calder, Stuart Davis, Georgia O'Keeffe, David Smith, Agnes Martin, and others—all the way back to John Sloan and all the way up to Jasper Johns." At the same time, Biddle recalls, the Museum wished to continue acquiring works by younger artists. "We had a great interest in the work of mid-career artists, such as Elizabeth Murray and Terry Winters, and we also wanted to buy works from exhibitions, especially the Biennials. We continue to buy contemporary art because that is our strong tradition, a key part of our mission. Asked to talk about some of the artists working now that she enjoys particularly, Biddle demurs. "The Whitney never wanted to say one school was the best, that this artist is better than that one. We've always wanted to show what's interesting and vital in America. It's a question of taking works of quality and exhibiting them."

With the opening of the new fifth-floor galleries, Biddle is looking forward to revisiting the Whitney's Permanent Collection. Among her favorite works is Charles Demuth's *My Egypt*: "It is one of the first paintings I remember seeing. The artist might have been thinking about the great pyramids, their enduring strength, and there's his iconic grain tower, revealing how Americans idealized their agricultural productivity at the time." Another favorite painting is Ben Shahn's *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti*, which presented the idea of social injustice in a contemporary scene. Shahn called the execution "another crucifixion." "I grew up in South Carolina, far away from the many problems which existed then, and when we moved to New York, visiting the Whitney's collection and seeing this and other paintings made me more aware of real life. I suppose that's an unfashionable way to look at paintings, but you come across things you hadn't known before and they lead you to other things."

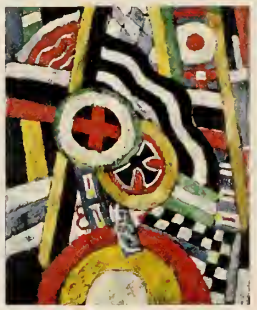
Flora Donovan, Fiona Donovan, and Flora Miller Biddle at the Whitney Museum's Breuer Building Birthday Party, 1996

Left: George Bellows, *Dempsey and Firpo*, 1924. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase, with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.95

Below: William J. Glackens, *Hammerstein's Roof Garden*, 1901. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase 53.46

❶ The first gallery of the new fifth-floor Permanent Collection installation evokes the salon atmosphere of the Museum's original building on West 8th Street, overseen by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. Mrs. Whitney's close relationship with a group of radical artists known as The Eight is represented by a selection of works, many from her own collection, that formed the core of the Whitney Museum's Permanent Collection. Working in progressive forms of realism, this socially minded group challenged academic style and traditional subject matter by depicting the contemporary experience of working people and adopting a painting style that would capture the immediacy of urban life in America.

❷ The second gallery presents the works of early modernist artists who enjoyed the support of Alfred Stieglitz and his 291 gallery, where many of these artists had their first public showing. At the beginning of the century, most American artists spent time in Europe as part of their artistic training, and many were influenced by the great European modernists, particularly Cézanne, Matisse, and Picasso. Artists such as Max Weber, Marsden Hartley, and Arthur Dove incorporated elements of European modernist style into a highly innovative and distinctly American form, as seen in John Marin's expressionistic watercolor, *Region of Brooklyn Bridge Fantasy* (1932) and Marsden Hartley's more abstract, intensely colored *Painting, Number 5* (1914–15).



Left: John Marin, *Region of Brooklyn Bridge Fantasy*, 1932. Watercolor on paper. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase 49.8

Above: Marsden Hartley, *Painting, Number 5*, 1914–15. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Gift of an anonymous donor 58.86

Right: John Storrs, *Forms in Space #1*, c. 1924. Marble. Whitney Museum of American Art; 50th Anniversary Gift of Mr. and Mrs. B.H. Friedman in honor of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, Flora Whitney Miller and Flora Miller Biddle. 84.37a-b

Below: Charles Sheeler, *Interior*, 1926. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.344

❸ In America following World War I, a climate of economic prosperity and technological innovation led artists to turn to the urban landscape as subject. Working in a style called Precisionism, these artists created largely unpopulated, heroic depictions of America's engineering and industrial triumphs—skyscrapers, factories, bridges—in a clean, hard-edged manner, emphasizing flat, bright colors, and simple geometric forms. Among the works on view in this gallery are John Storrs' sculpture *Forms in Space #1* (c. 1924), which captures the essence of New York's growing skyline, and Charles Sheeler's *River Rouge Plant* (1932), which monumentalizes the site of American industry, the factory.

CONTINUES P.15 >

Exploring the Permanent Collection Galleries

MEMBERS EVENTS

There will be a series of special members events celebrating the opening of the new fifth-floor Permanent Collection galleries from April 1–3, 1998. *Invitations will be mailed.*

Art After Hours
Tuesday, April 14 6–7:30 pm
Wednesday, May 6 6–7:30 pm
Stop by the Whitney after work to wind down with cocktails and a private tour with fellow art lovers of the new fifth-floor Permanent Collection galleries. Members are invited to bring a guest to these special after–hours events. Fee: $20 advance registration; $25 ticket at the door.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Whitney Members receive priority enrollment and very generous discounts on all Public Programs. Pre-registration is required. To register by mail or fax, please complete the Programs Registration Form on page 12, or call the Education Department at (212) 570-7710. For updated information on all Public Programs, please call the Public Programs Hotline at (212) 570-7722. Whitney Fellows and Whitney Circle members, please note: All Conversations on Art and Symposia are free to Whitney Fellows and Circle members. Whitney Fellows may also attend courses free of charge. There is a limit of two tickets per membership and reservations must be made at least one week in advance for all these events.

COURSES

Discovering American Art: From the Turn of the Century through World War II
Morning Sessions: Mondays, April 20, 27, May 4, 11
11 am –12:15 pm
The opening of the Museum's new Permanent Collection galleries provides an unprecedented oppportunity to learn about the complexity and diversity of American art. In this four-session course with a Museum lecturer, participants explore the galleries room by room when the Museum is closed to the general public, gaining understanding into why these works are masterpieces. The final session of the course is led by a contemporary artist who explains why these historical works continue to have resonance today. Limited enrollment to encourage full participation of the audience. Series admission: $60; members, senior citizens, and students with ID $45.

The Old and the New: Artists and Curators on American Art
Tuesdays 6:15–7:30 pm
Explore the Whitney's new Permanent Collection galleries with museum curators and leading contemporary artists, who select specific works to discuss each week. Each session is held in the galleries when the Museum is closed to the general public.
May 5 Thelma Golden
May 12 Elisabeth Sussman
May 19 Lisa Phillips
Series admission: $60; members, senior citizens and students with ID $45.
Individual sessions: $25; members, senior citizens, and students with ID $18.

CONVERSATIONS ON ART

David A. Ross and Richard Gluckman
Wednesday, April 22 7 pm
Join Whitney director David A. Ross as he discusses museums and architecture with Richard Gluckman, the architect who designed the Whitney's new Permanent Collection galleries. Admission $8; members, senior citizens, and students with ID $6

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Family Fun! Workshops

Red, White, Blue, and More! Exploring American Art
Saturday, April 25 9–11 am

All Aboard! Sites and Sounds of American Art
Saturday, May 30 9–11 am

Recommended for ages 5 to 10; children must be accompanied by an adult. Admission to each workshop: $6 per family; members $4. Pre-registration is required. Call (212) 570-7710.

Look Out!
Families Explore American Art
Saturdays 1 pm
Join us every Saturday for a free guided tour of the Museum designed exclusively for families. Each week discover something new and exciting about American art. Free with Museum admission. No reservations necessary.

GALLERIES AUDIO TOUR

Whitney Inform
The Whitney Museum is pleased to offer an exciting way to explore the new fifth-floor Permanent Collection galleries—Whitney Inform. Using this innovative technology, visitors can design their own tours by choosing the order of the information they hear. The system's easy-to-use, hand-held unit allows visitors to listen to commentary on specific objects on view and discussions about other topics of interest. This spring, Whitney Inform will feature detailed descriptions of objects from the fifth-floor Permanent Collection galleries, biographical information on artists such as Edward Hopper, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Alexander Calder, and discussions about other topics relevant to the exhibition. Visitors can also learn more about the founding of the Museum and the unique architecture of its Madison Avenue building, as well as listen to reviews of the building after its 1966 opening.

This spring Whitney Inform can be rented in the Museum Lobby for an additional fee of $3 per person; members price $2.

CATALOGUE

American Art
Treasures of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Introduction by David A. Ross, texts by Adam D. Weinberg and Beth Venn. This survey, filled with remarkable examples from the Whitney's Permanent Collection, presents more than 200 works by the most notable American artists in a variety of media. It is timed to coincide with the opening of the Whitney's Permanent Collection galleries. Published with Abbeville Press as part of its Tiny Folio series. 288 pages, 240 full-color illustrations. Cloth $11.95, Members price $9.55.

The Whitney Museum of American Art gratefully acknowledges the following individuals and institutions for their generous support of the $45 million "Campaign for the Whitney":
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Dia Center for the Arts & P.S. 1

Saturday, February 21 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

View recent works by American artists at two leading centers for contemporary art. At the Dia Center for the Arts in downtown Manhattan, we will be greeted by director Michael Govan and then tour new installations by sculptors Dan Flavin, Richard Serra, and Robert Irwin. After a private luncheon at the popular restaurant Man Ray, we will visit The Institute for Contemporary Art, P.S. 1 Museum in Long Island City, which has recently reopened after a major renovation. We will be greeted by the Center's director, Alanna Heiss, and enjoy a guided tour of the new exhibitions, which include a survey of works by 50 emerging American artists. Fee (includes transportation, admission, and lunch): $75

Members Mornings at the Whitney

Arthur Dove
Sunday, February 22 9:30 – 11:30 am

Bill Viola
Sunday, March 1 9:30 – 11:30 am

Join us for leisurely, in-depth tours of major exhibitions on Sunday mornings before the Museum opens to the public. Conducted by an Education Department lecturer, each tour is followed by informal discussion and a delicious brunch in our restaurant, Sarabeth's at the Whitney. Fee: $35. For reservations, please call (212) 570-7743.

PepsiCo Sculpture Gardens and the Neuberger Art Museum

Saturday, April 25 9:30 am – 6:00 pm

Join us for a relaxing day in picturesque Westchester County, New York. In the morning, we will visit the Neuberger Museum of Art, located on the campus of Purchase College, SUNY, where we will be greeted by the museum's director, Lucinda H. Gedeon. We will tour the special exhibition, "A Modernist Salon," which traces modernism from the turn of the century through the 1960s, and "Elizabeth Catlett Sculpture: A Fifty-Year Retrospective," the first comprehensive survey of Catlett's work in marble, bronze, and wood. We will also have time to view "Jazz Club," a multicultural, multimedia approach to jazz music, and Roy R. Neuberger's renowned collection of American art, which features major works by Milton Avery, Helen Frankenthaler, Edward Hopper, Isamu Noguchi, David Smith, and many others. We will enjoy a picnic lunch and a leisurely afternoon at the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens, a magnificent collection of works by major 20th-century artists, sited on 170 landscaped acres on the grounds of PepsiCo's corporate headquarters. Fee (includes transportation, admission, and lunch): $100

A Brandywine Weekend

Saturday, May 16–Sunday May 17

Your spring weekend will begin in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, where we will view the art of the Wyeth family and a special exhibition of the work of American illustrator Howard Pyle at the Brandywine River Museum. "Acres of Spring," at nearby Longwood Gardens, presents spring blossoms and flowering trees at the height of their beauty amid 365 acres of horticultural displays in the gardens and conservatories. At the Winterthur Museum in Wilmington, Delaware, founded by the DuPont family, American decorative arts are featured in period rooms in a mansion set among 1,000 acres of gardens. For a complete itinerary, please contact Mavis Morris at (212) 570-7743.

To register for Members Events and Art Tours. Please complete the registration form on page 12. If you are registering with your credit card, you may fax the form to (212) 606-0205 or call the Members Hotline at (212) 570-3641 for immediate assistance.

Space is limited; registration is accepted in order of receipt. All programs are subject to change. Program fees are nonrefundable unless the space can be filled from a waiting list. We reserve the right to cancel a program because of insufficient participation or other circumstances beyond our control, in which case all fees are refunded. Program fees cover actual expenses and are, therefore, not tax deductible.

Whitney Abroad

American Artists in France with
Adam D. Weinberg, curator, Permanent Collection
June 5 – 11, 1998

For further information, please call (212) 570-7743.

Great American Collections: Kykuit

Saturday, May 30 9:30 am – 5:30 pm

Join us for a trip to the historic Hudson Valley for a guided tour of Kykuit, the home of the Rockefeller family for four generations. Now owned and operated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the home and galleries still contain an extensive collection of paintings and sculpture, including family portraits, classical sculpture, and 20th-century works by modern artists from Alexander Calder to Andy Warhol. After touring the main floor of the house and the lower galleries, we will stroll through the terraced gardens, which offer one of the finest American examples of Beaux-Arts landscape and feature major sculptures by American and European artists. Fee (includes transportation, admission, and lunch): $125

Kykuit: Aerial View.
Photo: John Hill,
Tiger Hill Studios

Kykuit: East Facade.
Photo: Ping Amranand

Andrew Wyeth in Maine

September 10–13

You are invited to explore the landscapes depicted in the paintings of this celebrated contemporary American artist, on a trip designed especially for Whitney members in conjunction with the Museum's exhibition "Unknown Terrain: The Landscapes of Andrew Wyeth" (May 28–August 30, 1998). We will visit the new Wyeth Center at the William A. Farnsworth Library and Art Museum in Rockland, which houses Andrew and Betsy Wyeth's personal collection of Maine works, including paintings that have never before been seen by the public. Friends and relatives of the Wyeths will provide exclusive insights into how the landscapes of Maine have inspired the many Wyeth family artists. The tour will culminate in a boat trip to view the numerous islands and coastal settings that have been painted by the Wyeths, followed by a lobster feast. For a complete itinerary, please contact Mavis Morris at (212) 570-7743.

Members Programs Registration

Conversation on Art:
Greil Marcus and Robert Polito: 1948
Wednesday, January 28 7 pm
For Public Program descriptions, please refer to the Calendar located in the center of this magazine, or call (212) 570-7710.

By Mail: Please complete this form and mail with your check to:
Membership Programs, Whitney Museum of American Art,
945 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10021-2790
By Phone (212) 570-3641 By Fax (212) 606-0205

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2ND NAME (PLEASE FILL IN IF ORDERING TWO TICKETS FOR ANY MEMBERS TRIP)

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payable to the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Please bill my (check one)
O Visa O Mastercard O American Express

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EXPIRATION DATE

SIGNATURE (REQUIRED FOR CREDIT CARDS)

Collection in Context: 1948

January 16 – March 15, 1998

In 1948, the beginnings of a powerful political and cultural upheaval against official government policies in America were signaled by the writing of Jack Kerouac, bebop music, and Jackson Pollock's paintings. The emergence of dissident subcultures on both coasts was reflected in the paintings and sculptures of artists who embraced these social and aesthetic transformations. Half a century later, this exhibition dramatizes the role that the work of such artists as Thomas Hart Benton, George Grosz, and Lee Krasner played in the cultural ferment of the moment.

Sol LeWitt

This fall in the Museum's outdoor courtyard, the artist Sol LeWitt will produce a site-specific work titled *Double Pyramid (Whitney)*. The ziggurat form is one that has interested LeWitt for decades; in this new work, a two-part, multifaceted ziggurat will serve as a witty comment on the inverted ziggurat of the Whitney's Breuer building.

Sol LeWitt began creating his cement block structures in the mid-1980s. Using standardized units according to predetermined systems, the artist has created an array of forms from the modestly scaled to the massive, from simple geometric shapes to complex, almost baroque structures. LeWitt has produced cinderblock sculptures for Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam; the City of Münster, Germany, and the Billy Rose Sculpture Garden of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, among others. *Double Pyramid (Whitney)* was recently acquired through the generosity of the artist and with the support of the Museum's Painting and Sculpture and Drawing Committees.

Sol LeWitt – Maquette for *Double Pyramid (Whitney)*.

All photos by Sara Barrett

Dinner for the exhibition "Richard Diebenkorn," October 9, 1997

Fred Allen, of J.P. Morgan, and Jane Livingston, curator

Phyllis Diebenkorn and David A. Ross

Members viewing a sculpture by Henry Moore

In front of The Art Museum, Princeton University

Members Trip: Foundry to Campus, October 16, 1997

Whitney Fellows and Exhibition Associates visit the studio of sculptor Tom Otterness, October 22, 1997

Otterness with a new work-in-progress

In the galleries of "The Tate Gallery Selects. Views from Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art 3"

Leonard L. Lauder, Chairman of the Whitney Museum with Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery, London

Harry Kahn, David A. Ross, and Ruth and Gedale Horowitz

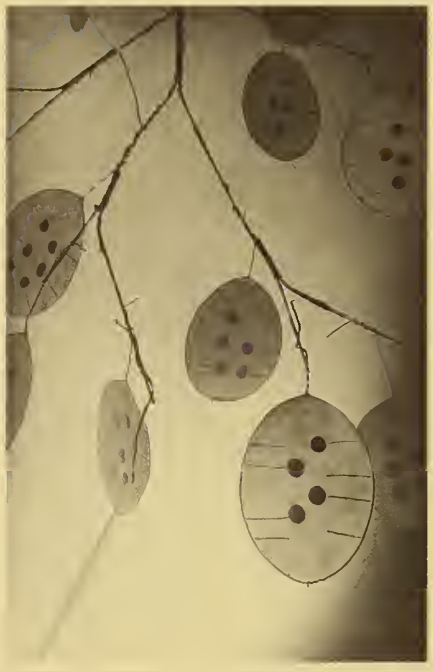
Annual Director's Dinner, September 30, 1997

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris
120 Park Avenue at 42nd Street
New York, New York

Garden of Qián by Ming Fay

February 6–April 17, 1998

Ming Fay has cultivated a beautiful fantasy garden, where fruit and foliage loom larger than life. In this lush garden, flourishing greenery and "silver dollar" plants symbolize money (*qián* in Chinese). Fay's delicately rendered natural forms function as gorgeous objects of contemplation, as well as metaphors for various aspects of human life.



Ming Fay, *Garden of Qián*, 1997 (detail). Collection of the artist. The "silver dollar" plant, so named because its paper-thin, silvery leaves resemble coins, is one of the many natural forms recreated in Ming Fay's *Garden of Qián*. Fay's meticulously hand-crafted plants and fruits are created using an updated version of the ancient art of making lacquerware, incorporating paper, wire, synthetic fiber, and layers of polyurethane.

Organized by Eugenie Tsai, associate curator and curator of branches, Whitney Museum.

This branch is funded by Philip Morris Companies Inc.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Champion
One Champion Plaza, Atlantic St. at Tresser Blvd.
Stamford, Connecticut

Morris Graves: Paintings, 1931–97

March 13–June 3, 1998

Morris Graves, *Little Known Bird of the Inner Eye #1*, 1941. Tempera on paper. Schmidt Bingham Gallery, New York

Born in Oregon in 1910, Morris Graves came to national attention with his visionary work of the 1940s. This retrospective exhibition includes more than 50 paintings and drawings covering a working career of 66 years and traces Graves' artistic development, from early modernist explorations in the 1930s, to elegantly sublime still lifes of the 1980s and 1990s. His highly personal and symbolic art reflects both his interest in the natural world and his studies of Eastern religion and philosophy.

This exhibition continues the branch museum's series of concentrations on works by American masters, a program instituted in 1982. Organized by Cynthia Roznoy, Champion branch manager.

This branch is funded by Champion International Corporation.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Performance on 42nd

Pheeroan akLaff
Wednesday, March 18 7:30 pm

Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company
Wednesday, April 15 7:30 pm

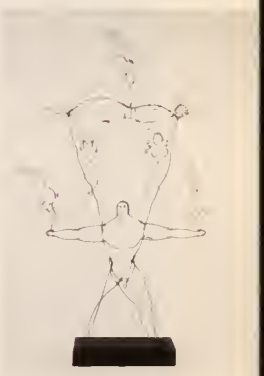
For further information, please call (212) 878-2453.

For hours and program details, please refer to the Calendar, located in the center of this magazine.

Edward Hopper, *Second Story Sunlight*, 1960. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 60.54

❹ The Hopper gallery, one of three galleries devoted to the work of a single artist, presents early works from Edward Hopper's stay in Paris in 1907–08 alongside his well-loved masterpieces, such as *Early Sunday Morning* (1930) and *Seven A.M.* (1948). In 1970, Hopper's widow, Josephine, bequeathed a collection of 2,500 of her husband's works to the Whitney Museum.

Alexander Calder, *Calder's Circus*, 1926–31 Mixed media. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase, with funds from a public fundraising campaign in May 1982. One half the funds were contributed by the Robert Wood Johnson Jr. Charitable Trust. Additional major donations were given by The Lauder Foundation; the Robert Lehman Foundation, Inc.; the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.; an anonymous donor; The T.M. Evans Foundation, Inc.; MacAndrews & Forbes Group, Incorporated; the DeWitt Wallace Fund, Inc.; Martin and Agneta Gruss; Anne Phillips; Mr. and Mrs. Laurance S. Rockefeller, the Simon Foundation, Inc.; Marylou Whitney; Bankers Trust Company; Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth N. Dayton; Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz; Irvin and Kenneth Feld; Flora Whitney Miller. More than 500 individuals from 26 states and abroad also contributed to the campaign. 83.36.1-56



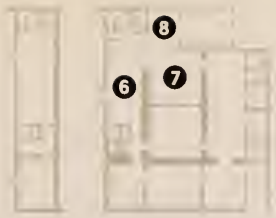
Alexander Calder, *The Brass Family*, 1927. Brass wire. Whitney Museum of American Art; gift of the artist 69.255

❺ Beckoned by the mobile that hangs over the stairway, the visitor then descends into the Alexander Calder gallery on the fourth-floor mezzanine. The centerpiece of this room is a new installation of *Calder's Circus* (1926–31), the famous, amazing array of miniature circus performers made of wood, wire, and cloth. Among the other seminal works on view, drawn from the largest collection of Calder's work in any public museum, are the stabile *Seven Foot Beastie* (1957), several of the *Constellation* works, and the wire sculpture of *The Brass Family* (1927).

❻ Disillusioned with urban idealism during the years of the Great Depression, Regionalist artists such as Thomas Hart Benton and John Steuart Curry, along with Social Realists such as Ben Shahn and Reginald Marsh, returned to the representational styles of earlier American art. While Regionalism turned to agrarian images to find the heroic, peaceful American prosperity seemingly lost in the urban arena, Social Realists used traditional painting techniques to comment on issues of political or social conflict, as exemplified by Jacob Lawrence's *War Series: The Letter* (1946), or Ben Shahn's *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti* (1931–32).

Left: Jacob Lawrence, *War Series: The Letter*, 1946. Egg tempera on composition board. Whitney Museum of American Art; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Roy R. Neuberger 51.11

Above: Thomas Hart Benton, *Poker Night (from A Streetcar Named Desire)*, 1948. Tempera and oil on panel. Whitney Museum of American Art; Mrs. Percy Uris Bequest 85.49.2



❼ One of the two central galleries is devoted to the work of Surrealist and abstract artists from the 1930s to the advent of Abstract Expressionism. Many European Surrealists fled to America during World War II, and their focus on dream imagery and the unconscious mind inspired younger American artists, such as Man Ray. At the same time, another group of artists continued to champion abstraction, believing that nonrepresentational art could provide a vehicle for direct communication with their viewers, free of the limitations of recognizable subject matter, as represented by works such as Stuart Davis' *Owh! In San Paõ* (1951) and Arshile Gorky's *The Betrothal, II* (1947). In establishing the validity of American abstraction, these artists laid the foundation for the next generation of internationally renowned artists, the Abstract Expressionists.

Left: Arshile Gorky, *The Betrothal, II*, 1947. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase 50.3

Above: Stuart Davis, *Owh! in San Paõ*, 1951. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art; Purchase 52.2

Georgia O'Keeffe, *Flower Abstraction*, 1924. Oil on canvas; Whitney Museum of American Art, 50th Anniversary Gift of Sandra Payson 85.47

❽ The last of the fifth-floor galleries is dedicated to the work of Georgia O'Keeffe, also a member of Alfred Stieglitz's 291 circle. On view are both highly abstract images, such as *Black and White* (1930), and the artist's innovative flower paintings, such as *Flower Abstraction* (1924), which reveals the extremely magnified and isolated exploration of natural forms that characterizes much of O'Keeffe's work.

Bill Viola

"...Viola provokes the heart by leading the mind to avenues of contemplation and self-discovery.
In so doing, [his] art provides the basis for an experience best described as transcendent —
a curious word to use at the end of an age of mechanical reproduction,
yet the only word that applies." — David A. Ross, from *Bill Viola*

This exhibition is sponsored by VEBA

Significant support has also been provided by Peter and Eileen Norton and the Peter Norton Family Foundation, with additional funding from Pamela and Richard Kramlich, Marion Stroud Swingle, Lynn Forester, Barbara Wise, and the National Committee of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

This exhibition, the first full-scale overview of the work of California-based artist Bill Viola (b. 1951), comes at a time when many wonder about the ways in which art and the new technologies will intersect. Although Viola's installations employ extremely sophisticated video and computer equipment, the artist demonstrates that these tools can be used in the service of purely aesthetic activities. The spirituality and simple beauty of his work affects most people profoundly.

Catalogue: *Bill Viola*, with contributions by Lewis Hyde, Kira Perov, David A. Ross, and Bill Viola. 216 pages, 272 illustrations, 198 in color. Published in association with Flammarion, Paris, New York. Paper $35, Members price $28; Cloth $60, Members price $48.

Bill Viola began experimenting with video as an undergraduate in the College of Visual and Performing Arts at Syracuse University in 1970. He was subsequently influenced and inspired by artists such as Nam June Paik, Peter Campus, and Bruce Nauman, but quickly developed his own vocabulary and vision along with an innovative approach to video. Viola's work reflects a search for the sublime through the observation of the everyday, a principle grounded in both Eastern and Western intellectual and spiritual traditions, including Islamic Sufism, Christian mysticism, and Zen Buddhism. At the same time, his art retains undercurrents of humor inherited from a childhood strongly influenced by the quirky, irreverent wit of Bob and Ray, the Firesign Theater, and Monty Python.

The exhibition is co-curated by Whitney Museum director David A. Ross and theater director Peter Sellars, who have selected the 15 major video installations, 25 videotapes, and artist's drawings and notebooks, dating from the mid-1970s to the present. Each video installation is a total environment that envelops the viewer in image and, often, sound. The linking of individual installations in a complex whole renders the entire exhibition a powerful and coherent aesthetic experience on its own and allows for the full range of Viola's concerns: the mysteries of birth and death, the unfolding of human consciousness, the physicality of perception, the possibility of transcendence.

Sellars, who specializes in contemporary opera, has brought his staging expertise to bear in the design of the exhibition. In addition, he has created the public programming for the exhibition, centered around the siting of two installations in selected locations outside the Whitney. These collateral installations extend the reach of the exhibition beyond the scope of a traditional presentation, providing an opportunity to examine the potential of art to function actively in our lives, and bringing the powerful experience of Viola's work, with its complex and diverse cultural origins, to new audiences.

Right: Bill Viola, *The Crossing*, 1996 (detail). Video/sound installation. Edition 1: the Bohen Foundation; Promised gift to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Photo: Kira Perov

Left: Bill Viola, *The Sleep of Reason*, 1988 (detail). Video/ sound installation. Carnegie Museum of Arts, Pittsburgh; Museum Purchase: Gift of Milton Fine and the A.W. Mellon Acquisition Endowment Fund Photo: Kira Perov

MEMBERS EVENTS

Private Tour for Whitney Fellows and Whitney Circle Members
with Bill Viola and
David A. Ross, director.
Wednesday, February 11 6 pm

Opening Reception for Whitney Fellows, Whitney Circle Members, Patrons, and Friends
Wednesday, February 11 7–9 pm

Opening Reception for Contributors and Members
Wednesday, February 11
9 pm–midnight
Invitations will be mailed.

Members Morning at the Whitney
Sunday, March 1 9:30–11:30 am
For details, please see page 8.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Video Culture:
A Seminar on Video Art
Thursdays, January 29,
February 5, 12, and 19 6–8 pm

Family Fun! Workshop
Switched On! Video
Art by Bill Viola
February 28 or March 14
9–11 am

Conversation on Art
Bill Viola, Peter Sellars,
and David A. Ross
Saturday, April 4,
Time to be announced

Bill Viola Booksigning
Sunday, April 5 1–2 pm

For Public Program descriptions, please refer to the Calendar located in the center of this magazine, or call (212) 570-7710.

For the schedule of the New American Film and Video Series, featuring single-channel video work by Bill Viola, please refer to the Calendar located in the center of this magazine.

Arthur D

I would like to take wind and water and sand as a motif and work with them, but it has to be simplified in most cases to color and force lines, and substances, just as music has done with sound. – Arthur Dove, from the exhibition catalogue, *The Intimate Gallery*, 1927

Arthur Dove, *Fields of Grain as Seen from Train*, 1931. Oil on canvas. Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Gift from Seymour H. Knox, 1958.

Arthur Dove has long occupied a central place in the history of American modernism as America's first abstract artist. He catapulted to fame in 1912, with abstractions that conveyed the convulsive rhythms and vital forces of nature, created in a style independent of European and American models.

Born in Canandaigua, New York, in 1880, Dove studied law and art at Cornell University, and later earned a living in New York City as a freelance illustrator for such publications as *Harper's* and *Scribner's*. In 1908, he sailed for Paris and remained abroad for 18 months, painting brightly colored landscapes primarily in the south of France. There, he also became acquainted with new tendencies in art through Alfred Maurer, a fellow artist and friend. Dove returned to New York in 1909 with a bright Fauvist palette and an awareness of Cézanne's work.

In 1910, shortly after exhibiting in a group show at Alfred Stieglitz's New York gallery 291, Dove was inspired to explore his own approach; he discarded representation and began to paint abstractly in earth colors. For more than three decades, Stieglitz, who became Dove's dealer and friend, promoted him as an American original.

Arthur Dove, *Movement No. 1*, c. 1911. Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio; Gift of Ferdinand Howald

From 1910 to 1918, Dove earned a marginal living through farming in Westport, Connecticut, where a close-knit colony of writers and artists congregated, among them Paul Strand and Paul Rosenfeld, but he was finally forced by financial need to resume his career as a commercial artist in New York. In 1922, with his new companion and later wife, the painter Helen (Reds) Torr, Dove moved onto a 42-foot yawl, the *Mona*. For the next seven years, the couple sailed within the vicinity of Halesite, Port Washington, Lloyd's Harbor, and Huntington Harbor on Long Island Sound. During the twenties, Dove continued to break new ground with a series of 25 assemblages that place flowers, leaves, paper, cloth, and even wood and metal, in witty and poetic juxtapositions.

"Arthur Dove: A Retrospective" is co-organized by the Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, and The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. The exhibition is coordinated by project director Debra Bricker Balken in collaboration with William C. Agee and Elizabeth Hutton Turner. Support for this exhibition at the Whitney Museum is provided by Edward E. Elson, the Henry and Elaine Kaufman Foundation, Evelyn and Leonard Lauder, and Gilbert and Ann Maurer. The exhibition tour and catalogue received support from Refco Group, Ltd., J. Mark Rudkin, National Endowment for the Arts, Glen Eagles Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and Michael J. Scharf.

ove

Over the course of the next decade, Dove's paintings grew larger. In 1933, the Doves moved to Geneva, New York, in order to settle his family estate. In Dove's Geneva landscapes, biomorphic images with sexual connotations meld with grazing cows, plowed fields, summer haystacks, and September sunrises. Soon after returning to Centerport, Long Island, in 1938, Dove suffered his first heart attack and was diagnosed with Bright's disease, a kidney condition. Yet the vitality of his late work, with its boldly contrasting geometric forms moving freely in open fields of color, underscored the vigor of Dove's imagination, and set important precedents for America's postwar abstract artists.

Comprising 78 paintings, assemblages, pastels, and charcoal drawings, "Arthur Dove: A Retrospective" brings together major works from every phase of the artist's remarkable career, exploring the development of Dove's language of abstraction as well as his experimentation with new media. The exhibition represents a continuation of Dove's long connection with the Whitney Museum. His work appeared in seven Whitney Annuals between 1932 and 1946, the year of his death, and in nearly 50 exhibitions, including last winter's acclaimed "Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York." In 1975, Whitney curator Barbara Haskell organized the last Dove retrospective for the San Francisco Museum of Art, a show that traveled to the Whitney Museum. The Whitney owns eight important works by Dove, including *Ferry Boat Wreck* (1931), purchased with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Roy R. Neuberger, which, after appearing in this exhibition, will be hung in the Museum's new Permanent Collection galleries.

Arthur Dove, *Huntington Harbor 1*, 1926. Collage on metal. The Phillips Collection, Washinton, D.C.

Catalogue: *Arthur Dove: A Retrospective* by Debra Bricker Balken in collaboration with William C. Agee and Elizabeth Hutton Turner. 200 pages, 175 illustrations, 100 in color. Published by the Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, and The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in association with The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. Paper $35, Members price $31.50; Cloth $50, Members price $45.

LOOKING AHEAD

Unknown Terrain: The Landscapes of Andrew Wyeth
May 28–August 30, 1998

Charles Ray
June 4–October 18, 1998

Mark Rothko
September 17–November 29, 1998

Bob Thompson
October 1, 1998–January 3, 1999

Duane Hanson
December 17, 1998–March 21, 1999

The Great American Nude
December 17, 1998–April 4, 1999

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